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Chairman: Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

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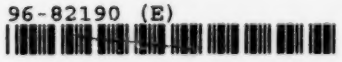

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/51/198-S/1996/270, A/51/130, A/C.4/51/L.9 and L.10)

1. Mr. FEDOTOV (Russian Federation) said that the 1990s had witnessed a new stage in the evolution of United Nations activities for the maintenance of international peace and security. Peacekeeping operations carried out under the auspices of the United Nations were becoming qualitatively more complex. The number of peacekeeping operations with "classic" parameters had been steadily decreasing. The proportion of multifunction operations performing complex tasks in the context of ongoing conflicts was rising. Both the capabilities of the United Nations, and its limitations, had become clearer. There was an urgent need to improve the efficiency of the peacekeeping arsenal. At the same time, the development of theory and practice should not erode the pivotal principles of United Nations peacekeeping activities. Effective peacekeeping was inconceivable without a close link between the deployment of "Blue Helmets" and political efforts to settle conflicts. Peacekeeping operations were not an end in themselves, but one of the most important instruments for reaching a comprehensive political settlement.

2. There was increasing recognition of the crucial importance of preventive activities, which were in fact the most rapid response. A clearer distinction must be drawn between peacekeeping operations and enforcement operations. Enforcement operations must be confined within strict limits and could be carried out only on the decision of the Security Council and under its political and, if necessary, operational control. The use of force within the context of "non-enforcement" peacekeeping operations, primarily to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel, also required an extremely responsible approach. Appropriate parameters and procedures must be clearly defined in the mandates of operations. The issue of coalition operations had become particularly topical recently. Such innovations in the practice of peacekeeping operations must be fully adapted to the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations. Any enforcement operation by a third party or a multinational coalition could be conducted only with the authorization of the Security Council, and transparency and the accountability of coalition actions to the United Nations must be ensured.

3. Further improvement of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations was of particular significance. The Russian Federation attached particular importance to the development of cooperation in the sphere of peacekeeping between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Through its consistent actions in a number of conflict zones in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Russian Federation, along with other Commonwealth member States, was making a concrete contribution to global efforts to maintain international peace and security. In the Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping was being carried out in full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and with the consent of the parties concerned. That was demonstrated by the activities of the United Nations observer missions in Georgia and Tajikistan and the close cooperation

with them of peacekeepers from the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

4. In the face of new threats to peace and stability, the rapid response capability of the United Nations must be enhanced. His delegation supported the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance the efficiency of the deployment of peacekeeping operations and expand their resource base. The system of standby arrangements was the most effective way of achieving that goal. The Russian Federation had made concrete proposals regarding its practical contribution to that system to the United Nations Secretariat. The establishment of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters for the initial stage of the establishment of peacekeeping operations was a useful initiative. It was important to ensure fair and equitable principles of staffing of the team, transparency in its activities, the timely provision of information to the Security Council on progress in the deployment of operations, and monitoring of that process by the Security Council. The concept of preventive deployment needed to be further explored and improved in practice. The success criteria, the exit strategy, and the principles for the timely reconfiguration of an operation depending on changes in the situation on the ground must be agreed upon in advance.

5. Operations with substantial humanitarian objectives were currently in the forefront. It was necessary to avoid an "interventionist reflex" by, inter alia, obtaining the consent of the Government of the receiving State, and where appropriate, the parties to a conflict. The possibility should be borne in mind of involving other international and non-governmental organizations in the humanitarian component of United Nations peacekeeping operations, including the provision by them, at their own expense, of personnel and other resources, under the coordinating role of the United Nations.

6. The Russian Federation took a positive view of the steps which had been taken recently to improve the mechanism of consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing States. It believed that the interests of troop-contributing States should be duly taken into account by the Security Council when establishing new operations or extending the mandates of operations already deployed. The Russian Federation was the second largest contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. In addition, Russian peacekeepers were serving in the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Georgia and Tajikistan and in the Implementation Force in Bosnia. That participation stemmed from the Russian Federation's understanding of the significance of peacekeeping as an important instrument for resolving global and regional crises.

7. The Russian Federation was in favour of establishing a solid financial base for United Nations peacekeeping operations. It was no secret that the shortfall of resources often made it difficult to implement the mandates of peacekeeping operations. Timely reimbursement of contributions and a more equitable apportionment of the costs of peacekeeping operations among Member States while preserving the special financial responsibility of the Permanent Member Security Council must be ensured. It was also important to try to diversify the sources of financing for peacekeeping operations, particularly by expanding the financial and material participation of the receiving States and the States involved. The Russian Federation, for its part, was doing everything possible

to pay off its arrears: in 1996 the Russian Federation's payments for peacekeeping operations had exceeded its assessed contributions by nearly US$ 100 million, and over the next few days it would make another large payment of over US$ 41 million, after which the total payments by the Russian Federation to the peacekeeping budget would amount to US$ 205.7 million.

8. The draft resolution on peacekeeping operations drawn up by the working group was a well-balanced and well-drafted document; his delegation hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

9. Ms. AL-SALEM (Kuwait) said that the question of peacekeeping operations was a very important item on the agenda of the General Assembly because it was closely linked with stability, peace and security in the world, in which, after the end of the "cold war", conflicts were taking place on racial and ethnic grounds. The international community needed to unite its efforts to overcome the obstacles which had arisen and seek the best ways of strengthening the potential of the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping operations. In that connection it was important to define precise and practical objectives for peacekeeping operations and ensure adequate financing for them. It was also necessary to strengthen the potential of the United Nations in the area of preventive diplomacy and rapid deployment in the event of the outbreak of conflicts and to ensure that peacekeeping became peacebuilding and that the United Nations did not have to resort to a military solution of problems.

10. Her delegation supported the proposal to establish a multinational high-readiness brigade to respond to threats to peace and security. It was time to consider that question in detail and create such a mechanism. Kuwait believed that consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council should be expanded and should be systematic in nature so that sending States could be kept informed about political events and the security situation in regions.

11. The United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission was monitoring the situation along the border between Iraq and Kuwait. Kuwait was providing all possible assistance and support to the Mission since it believed that the Mission was playing a vitally important role in the maintenance of peace and security in the border region between Kuwait and Iraq and in the Persian Gulf as a whole. In view of the financial difficulties of the United Nations, her Government had decided in November 1996 to assume responsibility for the financing of two thirds of the Mission's budget. For three consecutive years Kuwait had paid its contributions on time and in full for the upkeep of the Mission and other peacekeeping missions. Her delegation expressed appreciation to the commander and the members of the Mission, and also to the countries whose troops were in Kuwait, and undertook to cooperate with them in resolving all problems. Her delegation supported all the recommendations contained in the report and in the draft resolution.

12. Mr. AMORIM (Brazil) expressed appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Permanent Representative of Nigeria and the Chairman of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and thanked the delegation of Canada for conducting the deliberations of the open-ended working group of the Special Committee and the negotiations on one of the draft resolutions. Although the number of United Nations peacekeepers had sharply

declined in recent months, from 67,269 in July 1995 to 25,296, it should be borne in mind that the complexity of the tasks assigned to peacekeeping operations had not diminished and required a constant strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations in that area.

13. The level of outstanding contributions to the financing of peacekeeping operations had negatively affected the troop-contributing countries, which had not been reimbursed by the Organization in a timely manner. As a consequence of the lack of funds, the Department had continued to resort to the practice of using military officers on loan. Although that practice had been introduced as a temporary solution, it was not likely to be discontinued in the near future. As was indicated in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/130), there was a need to ensure that the recruitment and use of loaned personnel was consistent with the requirements of Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter, including that due regard be paid to wide geographical representation.

14. Brazil believed that the success of peacekeeping operations depended on respect for certain basic principles, above all the consent of all relevant parties. Moreover, a peacekeeping operation must be impartial and must not include the use of force, other than in exceptional circumstances for the purposes of self-defense. Peacekeeping operations should be an instrument to assist peacemaking efforts on the ground and should not be seen as an end in themselves. After the end of the "cold war", a number of peacekeeping operations had bordered on or trespassed into enforcement action, with unsatisfactory results. That only weakened the Organization's credibility as a broker for peace. It was necessary to establish clear guidelines for peacekeeping, taking into account the need to preserve the essential philosophy of the Charter regarding the distinction between the peaceful settlement of disputes and coercive collective action.

15. His delegation welcomed the idea of establishing a rapid deployment headquarters and felt that its staffing should be ensured on a broader geographical basis. Consultations and the exchange of information with troop-contributing countries on the basis of the guidelines set forth in the relevant Presidential statements played an important role in the conduct of peacekeeping operations. The enhancement of communication and transparency between the relevant parties concerned in peacekeeping operations was not only in line with the aspirations of most Member States but was also conducive to an improved peacekeeping performance. Brazil welcomed the expansion of the membership of the Special Committee, which would make possible a more constructive discussion of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

16. Mr. KARSGAARD (Canada) said that some progress had been made in the areas of consultations with troop-contributing countries, planning, lessons learned, civilian police and training. Canada was particularly encouraged by the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop the standby arrangements system, and also to elaborate plans for the establishment of a rapidly-deployable mission headquarters. That would make it possible to deploy peacekeeping forces from headquarters more rapidly once the Security Council had adopted a corresponding decision. In such circumstances saving time on deployment could save lives.

17. In spite of those improvements, however, the Department still did not have the capabilities and resources necessary for it to be the instrument of choice when the international community decided to address a particular crisis. Peacekeeping operations had become more complex in recent years and the Department had developed the necessary resources to manage those incremental complexities, particularly in so far as their civilian character was concerned. At the same time Member States had failed to provide the conceptual framework within which the Department could develop into a more flexible instrument that was able to respond rapidly to various situations. Currently a significant proportion of the Department's staff was composed of either civilians engaged on short-term contracts or military personnel provided on loan by Governments. That was a well-known problem which the Special Committee had considered at length in spring. Notwithstanding the excellent quality of the loaned officers and the dedication of the civilian employees, a major department could not be run in that way on a continuing basis. Member States must correct those imbalances and provide the necessary resources so that a greater percentage of the staff of the Department could be funded and recruited on a regular basis. That was the only way to ensure that the necessary corporate knowledge and expertise was maintained over the long term. The Special Committee noted in its report that adequate financial resources were crucial to the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Member States must meet their financial obligations and the Secretariat must develop a cost-effective and viable system for managing United Nations assets for the logistic support of peacekeeping operations.

18. Canada welcomed the agreement on revision of the membership structure reached by the Special Committee, which reflected the current realities of widespread participation in peacekeeping operations. In cooperation with other States, it was endeavouring to contribute to the development of new concepts for improving the capability of the United Nations to conduct peacekeeping missions.

19. Mr. AKAKPO (Togo) said that peacekeeping operations were very important for restraining the growth and escalation of military actions and seeking a peaceful settlement of conflicts. Positive results had been achieved in Cambodia, El Salvador and Mozambique. In other peacekeeping operations, however, the objectives had not been met. Togo believed that lessons must be learnt both from successes and from failures so as to improve the organization of future operations. Naturally it supported the Special Committee's recommendation that all necessary resources should be provided to training assistance teams.

20. Conflict prevention was equally important. Togo, despite its limited resources, was contributing to preventive diplomacy. The President of Togo, Mr. Eyadéma, was making great efforts in respect of conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes in the West African sub-region and in other parts of Africa. In that connection Togo believed that it was necessary to strengthen international cooperation, which would enable preventive diplomacy to fulfil its objectives.

21. In view of the growth in the number of United Nations peacekeeping missions, the question of adequate financing, which was necessary for the effective conduct of those operations, was of particular significance. Even though everyone understood the importance of that factor, the United Nations and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations did not have the resources even to

reimburse the expenses of troop-contributing countries. In those circumstances even developing countries were in a situation of subsidizing peacekeeping operations. Since peacekeeping was an obligation of all Member States, and in particular the Permanent Members of the Security Council, it was essential for Member States to make up their arrears in contributions without delay and without any conditions.

22. Another serious problem relating to peacekeeping operations was the security and safety of United Nations personnel. Everything possible must be done to punish those responsible for the deaths of peacekeepers and improve the security and safety of the "Blue Helmets" and the civilian personnel of missions. In that connection Togo welcomed the adoption in 1994 of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

23. Mr. DUMITRIU (Romania) said that despite the financial difficulties which affected them directly, peacekeeping operations continued to be an essential means of conflict management for the United Nations. The relative decline in the number of operations resulted not from a decrease in their importance but from the current inability of the United Nations to take adequate measures in all cases in the increasingly complex situations demanding action by the international community. If peacekeeping operations were to continue to serve as a useful instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security, clarity of mandates, political support and financial resources were needed. Romania considered that in order to conduct successful operations like those in Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique and Namibia, it was necessary to stop searching between the lines of the Charter for justification for non-action. Furthermore, the United Nations must try to avoid the risk of an excessive fragmentation of its thinking on peace operations as a whole. A rigid separation of the interconnected peacekeeping activities - preventive deployment, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping operations, and post-conflict peace-building - was of questionable value.

24. His delegation wished to underline the value of many proposals and recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee (A/51/130). Among them were the proposals and recommendations relating to a better use of preventive deployment, congruence between mandates, resources and objectives, full consideration and application of lessons learned, improved cooperation with some regional organizations, in particular the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the creation of partnerships between Governments which required equipment and those willing to provide it. Those recommendations had been widely accepted and had a good chance of being implemented. In that connection, Romania welcomed the draft resolution before the Committee, in which the Special Committee was requested to review the implementation of its previous proposals and consider new proposals. One of the new proposals aimed at establishing a rapidly deployable mission headquarters. His delegation wished to reiterate its support for the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat and a number of Member States to make the team function as soon as possible.

25. Some of the other recommendations made in the report of the Special Committee appeared to have less chance of being implemented because of the lack of financial resources. His delegation shared the concern over delays in the reimbursement of troop-contributing countries, including reimbursement in respect of operations whose mandates had been completed. It also felt that

greater transparency was needed as to how the scarce funds available for peacekeeping operations were used.

26. Romania was continuing to provide not only political but also direct support to United Nations peacekeeping operations. To the extent of its possibilities, it was making a significant contribution to the maintenance of peace and to the alleviation of the consequences of conflicts. Romania had carefully considered the new concepts offered by Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands and other Member States. It welcomed the attempt to develop a new dimension of United Nations potential - a genuine and reliable rapid reaction capability. His delegation fully recognized the complexity of implementing the concept. At the same time it was impossible to ignore the loss of human life, which would be lessened if the United Nations could react promptly to crisis situations.

27. Mr. NGO QUANG XUAN (Viet Nam) said that in recent years peacekeeping operations had become one of the most significant activities of the United Nations. At the same time, peacekeeping operations had been moving beyond the confines of traditional concepts about them, taking on complex tasks in extremely difficult situations. Although Viet Nam recognized the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations, it believed that they should never be regarded as a substitute for the political settlement of disputes and that they should be of a temporary nature. Viet Nam felt that peacekeeping operations must be carried out strictly in accordance with the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and must be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Viet Nam also felt that the basic principles of peacekeeping, namely the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defense, were essential to the success of peacekeeping operations.

28. Viet Nam believed that the United Nations should learn lessons from the successes as well as the failures of peacekeeping operations in order to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to it by Member States more effectively. In that regard it welcomed the establishment of the Lessons Learned Unit within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and called for the widest possible distribution among States Members of the Organization of the studies and research papers prepared by that Unit.

29. Viet Nam supported the conclusion made in the Special Committee's report that United Nations peacekeeping operations needed to be provided with clearly defined mandates, objectives, command structures, and secure financing. In order to ensure their effectiveness, they must have realistic mandates, including clear objectives and time frames for each operation. Additional efforts should be made to improve the planning, management and coordination of peacekeeping operations. In that regard Viet Nam welcomed the arrangements for consultation and exchange of information with troop-contributing countries.

30. The Special Committee was the only United Nations forum entrusted with responsibility for studying and analysing all aspects of peacekeeping operations as well as drawing lessons and setting principles and guidelines for improving peacekeeping operations. The drastic changes that peacekeeping had undergone recently should undoubtedly be reflected in the Special Committee in terms of a

review of its current structure. Since peacekeeping, in its political, financial and legal aspects, was a collective responsibility of all Member States, Viet Nam felt that the participation of a larger number of Member States in the Special Committee's work would make it more effective. Viet Nam was in favour of expanding the Special Committee and turning it into an open-ended body so that it would meet the needs of all Member States, in particular troop-contributing countries.

31. His delegation shared the view of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that the primary cause of the financial difficulties of the United Nations was the failure on the part of certain developed countries to discharge in full and on time their obligation to pay their assessed contributions to the regular budget and the peacekeeping budget. In that regard Viet Nam reiterated the special responsibilities of the Permanent Members of the Security Council. Viet Nam also agreed with the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that countries should pay their arrears as well as their current dues in full, on time, and without any conditions as proof of their political will to honour their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. However, Viet Nam also wished to propose that developing countries should be able to pay their arrears within a certain period of time in cases in which there were circumstances which were beyond the control of their Governments. In that connection he announced that in 1996 Viet Nam had decided to fulfil its financial contribution to the peacekeeping budget and had committed itself to paying all its outstanding arrears within five years.

32. His delegation concurred with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that there was an increasing imbalance between the expenses of the large number of existing peacekeeping operations and the resources available for the development activities of the United Nations. Viet Nam believed that the funding of peacekeeping operations must not be at the expense of development activities.

33. Mr. MARTINI HERRERA (Guatemala), speaking on behalf of the Central American countries, said that those countries attached great importance to peacekeeping operations. The Central American countries wished to confirm some basic principles of peacekeeping operations. In their view, peacekeeping operations should strictly abide by the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those relating to full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Peacekeeping operations must be carried out with the consent of the parties. With a view to the successful conduct of peacekeeping operations, it was necessary to draw on the experience acquired, but decisions relating to each operation must be based on an individual analysis of the situation in each specific case.

34. The Central American countries commended the initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency and strengthening the response capability of the United Nations in the context of peacekeeping operations. In that connection they supported the system of standby arrangements. In addition, they were following with interest the establishment of a rapidly deployable headquarters team in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

35. The Central American countries noted that the increase in the number of members of the Special Committee corresponded to the principle of universality -

one of the basic principles of the United Nations. Another important aspect was ensuring transparency when carrying out operations. In that regard the Central American countries noted with satisfaction the mechanism for conducting consultations between the troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat.

36. There was a need to review the rules relating to death and disability benefits in order to develop a uniform scale based on the principle of equality of all Member States. In addition, consideration should be given to the question of reducing the length of the period for consideration of claims for the reimbursement of Member States for their contributions of personnel and equipment to peacekeeping operations.

37. Mr. AL-KHAYARIN (Qatar) said that, while successful operations had been carried out in Cambodia, Namibia and Central America, new "generations" of conflicts associated with the growth of regional, political, separatist and ethnic tendencies had cropped up within States and in relations between them, and changes had occurred which had led to failures and delays in the conduct of peacekeeping operations, as in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the sharp rise in the number of peacekeeping operations had increased the financial burden. That had led to a review of the role of peacekeeping operations. A Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had been established to carry out a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations. His delegation shared the view of the Special Committee that peacekeeping operations were one of the Organization's most important means of settling disputes and maintaining international peace and security. At the same time, they were not a means of preventing disputes but of halting the escalation of conflicts while ways of achieving a peaceful settlement were being explored. The Special Committee attached great importance to conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, arbitration, conciliation, judicial settlement or resort to regional arrangements. The Committee had developed a number of definitions and principles relating to the implementation of peacekeeping mandates. Of greatest importance were the formulation of precise objectives, ensuring sufficient financing and the need to differentiate between peacekeeping functions and enforcement tasks in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, and in the conduct of such operations, to observe the principles of impartiality, consent of the parties, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and non-use of force.

38. Special attention must be paid to the role of preventive diplomacy in conflict resolution. Such diplomacy required the adoption of confidence-building measures. His delegation reaffirmed the need to lay the foundations for confidence and preventive diplomacy with a view to establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, the region in which the first United Nations peacekeeping operation had been carried out. There was a need to set in motion a peacekeeping mechanism, and his delegation shared the Secretary-General's view regarding the importance of preventive diplomacy in averting armed conflicts that might pose a threat to international peace and security. He supported the Special Committee's proposals and recommendations concerning ways of surmounting the current crisis in peacekeeping operations so that such operations could continue to serve as an effective means of maintaining international peace and security.

39. Mr. SHANMUGASUNDARAM (India) supported the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. India had participated in 26 peacekeeping operations and its troops, military observers and civilian police were currently serving in such operations in many parts of the world. More than 100 Indian peacekeepers had died in the service of the United Nations. The time had come to reflect on the lessons of past experience in order to build for the future. By their very nature, peacekeeping operations were interim measures which could only be of limited duration. Accordingly, there should be no hesitation in ending operations which had been overtaken by events or had become inconsistent with their mandates.

40. His delegation welcomed the proposal to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Effective peacekeeping required that the inputs of troop-contributing countries should be factored into the determination of mandates, changes therein, the review of operational plans and the formulation of rules of engagement because all those areas affected not only the performance but also the lives of troops. The statement made by the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996 (S/PRST/1996/13) had been a first step towards the greater involvement of troop-contributing countries in decision-making, which could evolve into an effective dialogue. India also hoped to participate constructively in the consideration of diverse aspects of peacekeeping, including operational mine clearance.

41. Currently, the number of military officers on loan to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was more than five times higher than the number of officers whose posts were financed by the United Nations. While his delegation acknowledged the contribution that such personnel could make, it considered that their preponderance hindered the development of an independent international civil service with expertise in the peacekeeping area and adversely affected the process of institutionalization, which was essential to the completion of the Organization's long-term tasks. It was also a sign that the Organization was succumbing to pressure from those who took an "à la carte" approach to its activities. He therefore believed that the Secretary-General should, if necessary, propose additional posts for military officers, to be financed from the support account. Moreover, in the interests of equity, all Member States should accept the principle of equal rates of compensation for peacekeepers killed or disabled while serving under the United Nations flag.

42. Outstanding debts for major operations that had ended more than two years earlier should be settled, and his delegation urged the States in arrears to pay their outstanding contributions in full. It was to be hoped that the continued attention to peacekeeping activities would not overshadow the wider goals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. In the final analysis, durable peace could be based only on economic development and growth. Economic development was the best form of preventive diplomacy, and the Organization's efforts and resources should be directed towards that end.

43. Mr. HRBAČ (Slovakia) said that during its 50-year history, the United Nations had successfully completed a number of peacekeeping missions. On the other hand, there had been several cases where efforts by the Organization had failed. The Charter of the United Nations was designed to make it possible to take measures not only to remove threats to peace, but also to prevent them. It was necessary to set up an early-warning system capable of identifying potential

sources of conflict well in advance. Slovakia encouraged the Secretariat to enhance further the framework for coordination involving the three departments primarily concerned with the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts: the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

44. There were various ways to prevent conflicts. The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (UNPREDEP) was a positive example of a successful preventive mission. That mission could serve as a model to be followed and could be applied to some other potential conflict areas as well.

45. Most of today's conflicts were marked by the collapse of State institutions and a breakdown in law and order, resulting in humanitarian tragedy on a massive scale. A multidimensional approach, including measures to address the root causes of the conflict, were necessary for a peace mission to be successful. A clearly defined mandate for operations and a distinction between peace enforcement and peacemaking at the early stages of mission planning were vital for the success of a mission on the ground. Peacekeepers as well as civilian police should be geographically and culturally suited to the local population in conflict areas. In that regard, the role of the Department of Public Information was not only to inform, but also to explain the objectives of a peacekeeping mission primarily in a conflict area. Since the radio was one of the most cost-effective and far-reaching media available to the Department, his delegation supported the establishment of United Nations radio stations as an integral part of the overall mission.

46. The multidimensional approach should include post-conflict peace-building and confidence-building measures, irrespective of whether a conflict was ethnic or religious in origin or simply the result of a struggle for power. Slovakia supported the proposal by the Secretary-General that the chief mission should be given the capacity to provide some direct development assistance to those affected. The seven market days organized by the Transitional Administrator in Eastern Slavonia in October 1995, in which more than 45,000 Serbs and Croats had participated, thus contributing to a reduction of individual hostility and suspicion, was an example of confidence-building measures. The establishment of democratic structures, where regional organizations played a vital role, was another significant part of post-conflict peace-building.

47. Landmines not only posed a threat to civilians but were also a serious obstacle to economic and infrastructure recovery in the post-conflict period. It was necessary to differentiate between operational demining, aimed at the immediate objectives of a peacekeeping mission, and humanitarian demining, targeting long-term goals within the framework of post-conflict peace-building. Operational demining should, wherever appropriate, be an integral part of peacekeeping mandates. In that respect, his delegation was pleased to point out the significant contribution made by the Slovak engineering battalion to United Nations demining activities in the former Yugoslavia in the past several years. His country had already unilaterally declared a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines.

48. Mr. SKRYPKO (Belarus) said that his country, in general, supported the proposals and recommendations on ways to improve the peacekeeping machinery of

the United Nations set forth in chapter III of the report of the Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/130). Operations should be conducted in strict accordance with such fundamental criteria for peacekeeping as the consent of the parties to the conflict to the deployment and conduct of missions; impartiality and the non-use of force, except for self-defence; and the principles of international law concerning sovereign equality and the territorial integrity of States, and non-interference in their internal affairs. In that context, the non-discriminatory and uniform application of peacekeeping principles and criteria was of paramount importance. At the same time, peacekeeping operations should be closely linked with efforts to resolve conflicts by political means. In that connection, he noted with satisfaction the establishment, within the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, of a humanitarian early-warning system database, which could be accessed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Use of that information would make it possible to mobilize efforts by the international community to prevent dangerous conflicts at the earliest possible stages in their evolution. His delegation stressed the need to distinguish between traditional peacekeeping operations, carried out under Chapter VI of the Charter, and peace-enforcement operations, under Chapter VII. Such different and generally opposite methods could not constitute a continuous series of measures to resolve conflict situations.

49. Belarus supported the process of strengthening consultation arrangements and attached particular importance to the holding of consultations with prospective troop contributors in good time before initiating individual peacekeeping missions. It was also in favour of improving the mechanism for coordination and consultations between the United Nations and regional organizations on issues of early prevention and conflict settlement. His delegation supported the proposal to set up a rapidly deployable headquarters team, which would logically develop existing stand-by arrangements and enhance the Organization's ability to set up the backbone of field headquarters for new operations and, accordingly, missions themselves. The system of stand-by arrangements was the most acceptable and realistic form for his country's gradual involvement in peacekeeping activities. Consideration was currently being given to the possibility of training Belarusian nationals at international peacekeeping training centres and within the framework of the NATO Partnership for Peace programme for their subsequent participation in peacekeeping operations.

50. His delegation noted with satisfaction the decision by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations to expand its membership, which would significantly increase the transparency of all the Organization's peacekeeping activities and meet current needs for the democratization of the composition and methods of work of its various bodies. Belarus was considering the possibility of participating in the Special Committee's activities as a full-fledged member at its next session. He positively assessed the activities of the Informed Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Peace and hoped that the Group would finalize in the near future its recommendations on strengthening the United Nations potential in the maintenance of international peace and security.

51. Mr. PERRILLA (Argentina) said that peacekeeping operations were one of the means by which the United Nations resolved situations that had a negative impact on stability, peace and security in the world. At the current time, Argentina was taking part in eight of the 17 United Nations peacekeeping operations. Its

unreimbursed expenditures in connection with those operations exceeded by several times the amount of Argentina's contributions for peacekeeping operations and the regular budget.

52. With regard to professional training, during the Pan-American Conference of Ministers of Defence in Bariloche from 7 to 9 October 1996, Argentina had proposed the establishment of a regional training centre, in whose activities all the countries of the continent could participate. The objective was to enhance, by means of professional training, the coordination and level of participation by countries of the Western Hemisphere in United Nations operations.

53. In the Supplement of an Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General reviewed most of the issues with which the United Nations was currently dealing. Preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment were means which the Organization would frequently employ in the future. For such activities, information and an effective early-warning and rapid-reaction system were essential. Argentina considered that force should be used in exceptional cases, although in specific situations the Security Council could recommend that Member States take specific measures under strict monitoring, of which the operations in Haiti were an example. With regard to the chapter on post-conflict peace-building, it should be kept in mind that that issue was closely linked with the initiative concerning the activities of the "White Helmets", who to date had carried out their work in a suitable manner in different operations.

54. The need to react more speedily to situations threatening peace could be met by strengthening the standby arrangements. Argentina, together with 24 other countries, was considering the question of establishing a rapidly deployable headquarters team. With regard to the military equipment necessary for deploying United Nations forces, the establishment of reserve logistics bases similar to those in Brindisi and Oslo might make it possible to speed up reaction. Furthermore, at a time when the United Nations was being increasingly subjected to criticism, closer than ever attention should be given to the dissemination of information.

55. Recently, the National Congress had ratified the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. Argentina, convinced of the need for the Convention's speedy entry into force, urged all other Member States to ratify it in the near future.

56. His country remained concerned about the fact that many countries had stopped paying their respective contributions for peacekeeping operations. As the representative of Japan had pointed out at the previous meeting, it would be unfortunate if the Organization showed uncertainty about instituting further peacekeeping operations merely because of the current financial crisis. Argentina hoped that that problem would be solved in the near future. Furthermore, his country noted with satisfaction the agreement to enlarge the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and considered that the inclusion of new members would play a useful role during the financial crisis and in view of the lack of political support for the Organization.

57. Mr. PARNOHADININGRAT (Indonesia) expressed support for the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the member States of the Movement

of Non-Aligned Countries and said that a reappraisal of the Organization's peacekeeping operations was necessary in order to adopt more effective and innovative approaches to conflict prevention and resolution. One of the many tasks before the international community was to enhance the understanding of the mandates, time-frames and main political objectives of those operations and promote full implementation of the guiding principles as set forth in the report of the Special Committee (A/51/130).

58. Referring to other aspects of peacekeeping operations, his delegation was pleased to note that the Special Committee had recognized that the developed nations were in a better position to make more generous contributions for peacekeeping than economically less-developed countries. He hoped that the recently established practice of consultations with troop-contributing countries would contribute to ensuring transparency in the decision-making of the Security Council concerning mandates for the deployment and extension of peacekeeping operations and that the institutionalization of those consultative arrangements, leading to even greater efficiency, would be the next step taken. The overall political direction and control should remain with the Security Council and the responsibility for more detailed operational planning and command rested with the Secretary-General. It was equally important that full consideration should be given to the possible participation by all Member States in peacekeeping operations.

59. His delegation in principle supported the standby arrangements and felt that developing countries, in particular, troop-contributors, should be well represented in the composition of a rapidly deployable headquarters team, which would enhance broad international support for its effective functioning. In that connection, Indonesia wholeheartedly supported the decision by the Special Committee to expand its membership.

60. Mr. RIVERO (Cuba) said that his delegation fully supported the statement made at the 15th meeting by Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Although peacekeeping was one of the key instruments available to the United Nations to resolve conflicts and to maintain international peace and security, it was not a preferred method of containing conflicts. Cuba felt that maximum efforts should continue to be made to settle conflicts at an early stage using various methods to facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes. It was disturbing that in recent years attempts had often been made to erase the line between the provisions of Chapters VI and VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the use of force on behalf of the United Nations was becoming more widespread. In addition, there was a tendency to confuse the concepts of peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding operations. In that regard his delegation felt that the Special Committee should take up the question of drafting a declaration embodying the relevant principles and submit it for the approval of the General Assembly. The set of principles adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at its meeting in Cairo should be taken into account in that context.

61. The report of the Special Committee (A/51/130) contained a number of conclusions and recommendations, the most important of which, in Cuba's opinion, was the recommendation of expanding the membership of the Special Committee. That was the first step, and it was of great importance, although Cuba continued to believe that since all States Members of the United Nations were required to

contribute to activities for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Special Committee should be an open-ended body so that all Members of the Organization could participate in its work. That would contribute to the establishment of an atmosphere of greater transparency and trust when considering the question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

62. On the question of the staffing of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, his delegation noted with concern the inadequate representation of developing countries. That problem had now worsened because of the practice of using seconded personnel. His delegation felt that that practice was inconsistent with the provisions of Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations, and also with the rules and regulations governing the recruitment of personnel in the Secretariat which had been adopted by the General Assembly. The practice had adverse consequences for the Organization, and the Secretary-General should take steps without delay to correct the situation. One such measure could be the introduction of a moratorium on the recruitment of personnel until a report on the question was submitted and the General Assembly took appropriate steps.

63. With regard to the serious problem of financing, his delegation was deeply concerned that the country which had the largest assessed contribution to the Organization's budget was withholding its payments in pursuit of political and other goals. In that regard it must be pointed out that the contribution of Member States must be paid in full, on time and without any conditions.

64. Another problem in the area of financing was reimbursement of the expenses of countries participating in peacekeeping operations. The arrears of the United Nations to 71 countries in respect of the provision of troops and logistical supplies used in 16 peacekeeping operations amounted to US$ 1.44 billion, approximately US$ 400 million of which was owed to the developing countries. It should be stressed once again that the problem required an urgent solution. As to the question of establishing a rapidly deployable headquarters, it should be recalled that the issue had been considered at a number of meetings of the Special Committee and required further discussion before Member States could take a final decision. In his delegation's view, the functions of the new unit should relate to peacekeeping operations and not other operations, for example, post-conflict peace-building, humanitarian activity or assistance in conducting elections. The financing mechanism should be similar to the mechanism used for peacekeeping operations, and the staff should be recruited on the basis of the concepts of minimum need and the principle of equitable geographical representation.

65. Mr. PELEG (Israel) said that peacekeeping operations had always been a vehicle for preserving peace and preventing armed conflict. Israel had cooperated with United Nations peacekeeping missions in the Middle East since the time of their establishment. In July 1995 a training course had been held in Israel under the auspices of the Israel Defense Forces designed to promote and enhance communication and understanding between the Israel Defence Forces and the various United Nations peacekeeping forces in the region.

66. Israel had acquired a wealth of experience in dealing with humanitarian issues and had begun to share that experience by participating in several peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Haiti and in Africa. The activity of

various peacekeeping missions in Africa was an indication of the fragile situation throughout that continent. Cooperation between Israel and African countries dated back to the early days of Israel's independence. Africans from many different States had travelled to Israel to receive training and Israeli scientists and engineers travelled throughout the African continent to assist developing nations.

67. In recent years Israel's assistance to African countries had increasingly been provided within the framework of United Nations-sponsored peacekeeping activities. Israeli observers had participated in the elections held in South Africa and Mozambique and in 1994 Israel had been the first country to respond to the request of the United Nations to provide humanitarian assistance to the survivors of the slaughter in Rwanda. In addition, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations, Israel had established a field hospital in Goma, Zaire to provide medical assistance to thousands of Rwandan refugees. The countries of the world were once again focusing their attention on the African continent. The international community must do everything possible to prevent a humanitarian disaster in the Great Lakes region. Israel had responded promptly to the Canadian initiative by offering relief assistance to Zaire in the form of medicine and other medical supplies and would continue to contribute to those humanitarian efforts in cooperation with the international community.

68. Ms. ZOELISOA (Madagascar) said that in the early 1990s, after the end of the "cold war", a new era of hope, peace, security, stability and well-being had begun throughout the world, freed from ideological and political clichés. However, hopes for the establishment of a just international order were being overshadowed by mankind's feeling of concern and alarm at the emergence of flashpoints of tension in many different regions. That tension was reflected in such negative phenomena as terrorism, separatism, expansionism, intolerance and xenophobia. In that situation the entire international community must mobilize its efforts to establish a system for the prevention and settlement of conflicts. One of the initiatives in that area was the implementation of "An Agenda for Peace", formulated in 1992 by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

69. The new United Nations peacekeeping system had already demonstrated its effectiveness in a number of situations, for example in Ethiopia and Somalia in 1993 and in Yugoslavia and Liberia in 1995. Madagascar fully supported that new approach and, acting under the auspices of OAU, had played a role in promoting efforts to settle the conflict in the Comoros in 1995. In addition, her Government had sent 15 judges and legal specialists to Rwanda to work as members of the International Criminal Tribunal and in Rwanda's legal system. It was now necessary to intensify and strengthen the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations through, inter alia: giving the General Assembly access to the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of conflicts and granting it the necessary powers; strengthening regional structures for the settlement of conflicts from the very outset, acting under the auspices of the United Nations, OAU and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries; strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, since one of the causes of conflict was poverty; and strengthening the mediatory role of the United Nations forces.

70. Mr. RI JANG GON (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that there were many problems in the modern world as a result of war and violence, confrontation and distrust. Mankind's aspiration to a free and peaceful new world order was facing a great challenge. It was an urgent duty for each Member State and the international community to stop wars and conflicts and establish lasting peace and security. In that connection the United Nations, whose primary objective was the maintenance of international peace and security, had a special role to play. The ultimate purpose of any measures to settle conflicts was to establish peace. Peaceful means were the best option for resolving conflicts. His delegation felt that the imposition of peace by military or violent means was a denial and destruction of peace, and that any peacekeeping activities presupposing the use of force could not be said to be true peace activities.

71. All United Nations peacekeeping activities should be conducted on the basis of the principles of respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and impartiality. Although Member States had achieved different levels of development, they all had equal rights to sovereignty and self-determination. If peacekeeping activities violated the sovereignty of States, interfered in their internal affairs or were carried out in the interests of one party to a conflict, they would not win the support of Member States or achieve the expected results. In order to ensure the effectiveness of peacekeeping activities, due attention must be paid to the causes and background of conflicts, the positions of the parties concerned and even possible effects of peacekeeping activities on neighbouring countries and on the region as a whole. It was also important to prevent peacekeeping activities from being used by certain countries for their own political purposes. Cases of misuse of peacekeeping operations by certain powers were still occurring even in the post-cold-war era.

72. It was abnormal that United States troops stationed in South Korea were still using the name and flag of the United Nations. The "United Nations Command" in South Korea was a camouflage created by the United States of America to pursue its objectives without any United Nations resolution. The "United Nations Command" in South Korea meant the United States command, and the "United Nations Forces" were the United States forces. The dissolution of the "United Nations Command" in South Korea was recommended in a resolution of the United Nations, and all the peace-loving forces of the world called for the implementation of that resolution. The United States of America must remove the insignia of the United Nations from the caps of its forces in South Korea. The United Nations, for its part, must take decisive steps to dissolve the "United Nations Command" in South Korea, which was not under its command; that would undoubtedly contribute greatly to the establishment of an atmosphere conducive to ensuring lasting peace in the Korean peninsula.

73. Ms. ZAZA (Zambia) said that as a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, her delegation wished to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Thailand. Peacekeeping operations were of great significance for the maintenance of international peace and security. In recent years, the nature of peacekeeping operations had changed, and they had begun to be carried out on a broader scale. The United Nations must plan those operations carefully and provide them with adequate financial, human and material resources. While supporting peacekeeping operations as a whole, her

delegation felt that the abundant resources spent to carry out some of those operations could be rechannelled to address pressing needs in the areas of education, health and the environment, but that to that end it was necessary to make a genuine commitment to resolving conflicts by peaceful means.

74. Since 1979, Zambia had been a troop-contributing country to peacekeeping operations. Like other such countries, Zambia had lost lives. Her delegation believed that peacekeeping operations should be conducted on the basis of a clear mandate, in observance of the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, impartiality, consent of the parties to the conflict to the concept of conducting the operation, non-interference in internal affairs, and non-use of force except in self-defence. It also welcomed cooperation with non-governmental organizations since they were better placed to gather information which took into account the cultural characteristics of different countries. Zambia welcomed the decision to establish a rapidly deployable mission headquarters within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and was confident that its performance would meet the expectations of the international community. It also hoped that equitable representation would be ensured in the staff of the headquarters and commended Norway for pledging to cover the expenses of one person from a developing country for a position in the headquarters.

75. Zambia was also concerned about the issue of reimbursement of the costs of peacekeeping operations. It was important to speed up the process of reimbursement, which would enable Zambia to augment its peacekeeping budget. With regard to the issue of death and disability compensation, her delegation strongly felt that a uniform scale should be established and was happy to note that efforts were already underway to address that problem.

76. Mr. PRICKETT (Australia) said that the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations reflected the important role which United Nations peacekeeping played in the international community's response to threats to international peace and security. Recent developments in many parts of the world had reinforced the need to redouble efforts to strengthen the preventive and peacekeeping capabilities of the United Nations. Her delegation continued to emphasize the importance of enhancing the planning capability of the United Nations for the deployment and management of peacekeeping operations. It supported proposals which allowed the Secretariat to have a greater capacity to conduct feasibility studies of options for the consideration of the Security Council; translate mandates into achievable concepts of operations; provide timely advice and support to the field and meaningful feedback to the Security Council; and develop doctrines and operational concepts, standing operational procedures and related common terminology for United Nations peacekeeping operations.

77. Although the establishment of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters was a constructive step, it would not be a panacea for the range of problems experienced in previous United Nations peacekeeping missions; it would provide operational and planning improvements, however, and would enable the United Nations to deploy more quickly to the field a well-prepared and jointly trained team of military and civilian personnel in the most critical phase of peacekeeping operations. In establishing such a headquarters within the Secretariat, due attention must be given to ensuring transparency of decision-

making related to its structure, the opportunity for all to be informed and consulted in its finalization, and the selection of experienced personnel, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical representation. His delegation supported the Secretariat's proposal that the headquarters should be made up of a small number of personnel nominated by Member States, existing Secretariat staff and personnel earmarked by their home countries for training and deployment. In addition, the headquarters needed a sound financial basis. Given the current financial situation of the Organization, a viable interim solution would be to establish a trust fund to cover the costs of those Member States which were unable to provide officers on loan. A more appropriate financial basis for the headquarters would be through regular budget funding.

78. As recent events had shown, the role of regional organizations and structures in peacekeeping efforts and preventive action and also the efforts of multinational coalitions must be fully acknowledged. Encouragement should be given to further cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations on mutually reinforcing measures in the field of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacemaking. One of the important organizations playing a significant role in that respect was the OAU Central Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Management, which deserved the support of the international community. His delegation also supported the Secretary-General's practical proposals to improve preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, including the use of standby arrangements. However, regional organizations or multinational coalitions could not be a substitute for the United Nations, which should continue to play a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security, even at a time of financial difficulties.

79. His delegation was pleased that pragmatic solutions had been found in providing adequate staff for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the absence of adequate and regular funding. His delegation believed that while in principle staff should be provided and funded through the regular budget, if that was not possible during the financial crisis, the provision of staff at no cost was a useful alternative. Nevertheless, the continuing financial crisis, caused solely by the recalcitrance of the largest contributor to the United Nations budget about paying its arrears, was imposing an increasingly heavy and unfair burden on those Member States which met their obligations by paying their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions and also on troop-contributing countries, some of which were least able to afford such a burden. Quite apart from the very large and unfair financial burden imposed, the political affairs within the United Nations system were highly destructive. Australia welcomed the upcoming expansion of the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and hoped that it would reinvigorate the Special Committee's work and contribute to a strengthening of trust and cooperation in the peacekeeping arena.

80. Ms. DARMANIN (Malta) said that her delegation wished to associate itself with the views expressed in the statement by the representative of Ireland.

81. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the general debate on item 86 should be concluded and that decisions should be taken on the draft resolutions on the item at the Committee's next meeting, on 20 November 1996 at 3 p.m.

82. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.